

## Agency Overview

The Idaho Human Rights Commission (IHRC) was created by the Idaho Legislature in 1969. The act has been amended several times over the years, but the general purposes of the act as set forth in Idaho Code 67-5901(2) remain unchanged: "To secure for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination . . . and thereby to protect their interest in personal dignity, to make available to the state their full productive capacities, to secure the state against domestic strife and unrest, to preserve the public safety, health, and general welfare, and to promote the interests, rights and privileges of individuals within the state."

Currently the IHRC has statutory authority to investigate complaints of discrimination in education, employment, real estate transactions, and public accommodations based on race, color, religion, national origin, and sex. In employment, housing, and public accommodations, it handles disability discrimination claims. Claims of age discrimination, for those who are 40 years of age or older, are processed only in employment cases. There are nine commissioners who are appointed by the Governor, representing labor, industry, and the ethnic and geographic diversity of Idaho. The commission has one office in Boise, and a staff of 11 FTEs.

## Core Functions/Idaho Code

### Administrative case processing. Idaho Code 67-5901, 67-5906, 67-5907, and 67-5908

The primary work of the IHRC is to investigate claims of discrimination and to advise the parties on whether there is probable cause to believe that illegal discrimination has occurred. The administrative complaint must be filed within one year of the alleged unlawful discrimination. Idaho law makes the administrative filing a prerequisite to a case being filed in court. A court claim must be filed within 90 days of the IHRC's issuance of administrative closure.

### Information and referral. Idaho Code 67-5906 (9)

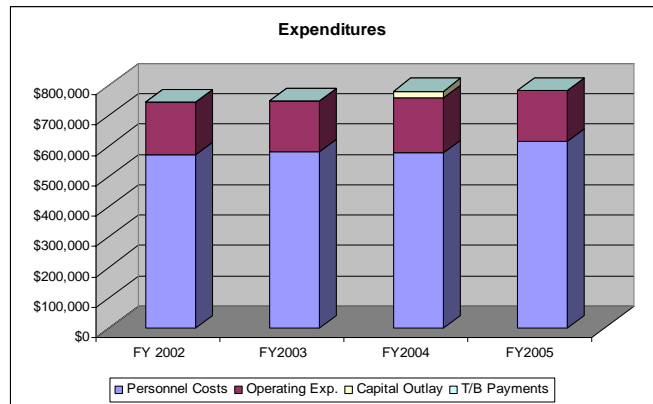
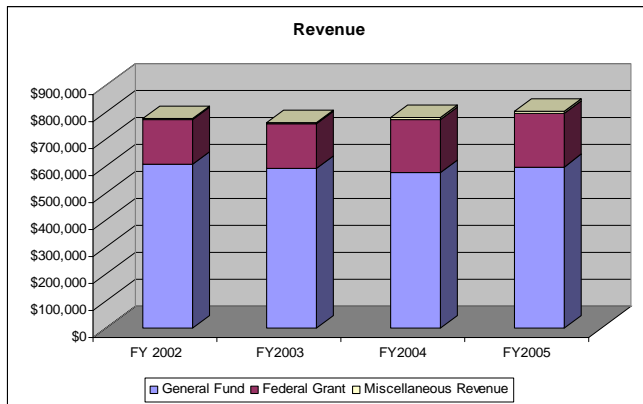
The commission frequently is contacted by people in difficult situations that fall outside the scope of the commission's statutory authority. In each case, the intake officer attempts to direct the person to a resource that will be able to provide more direct assistance. The commission intake staff also receive many contacts from people who could file a formal administrative complaint with the IHRC, but do not want to do so at that particular point in time. Intake staff will work with them to help them resolve their problems on their own, without the necessity of filing an administrative complaint.

### Education about discrimination and the law. Idaho Code 67-5906 (9), (10) and (11)

Commission staff offer seminars, workshops, technical assistance, and training programs to help Idahoans understand discrimination law and to be able to resolve discrimination disputes on their own. The IHRC also has the responsibility to inform the Governor and the Legislature of any recommendations it may have for legislative or other action to effectuate the purposes and policies of the anti-discrimination law. Most of the statutory changes that have been made over the years to the Idaho Human Rights Act have come, at least in part, from commission efforts to fulfill this responsibility. Also, the IHRC has taken public stands on issues before the Legislature and other bodies that would impact human rights within the state.

## Revenue and Expenditures:

Revenue	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
General Fund	\$607,700	\$591,600	\$575,900	\$598,100
Federal Grant	\$164,400	\$164,900	\$197,900	\$198,700
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$6,700	\$6,700	\$6,700	\$6,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$778,800</b>	<b>\$763,200</b>	<b>\$780,500</b>	<b>\$803,500</b>
Expenditure	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
Personnel Costs	\$570,100	\$581,000	\$579,100	\$614,700
Operating Expenditures	\$175,200	\$169,100	\$179,200	\$167,600
Capital Outlay	\$0	\$0	\$23,400	\$1,500
Trustee/Benefit Payments	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$745,300</b>	<b>\$750,100</b>	<b>\$781,700</b>	<b>\$783,800</b>



### Profile of Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided

Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
Total of administrative cases filed	483	579	520	532
Issues most frequently raised in administrative cases*				
Discharge (actual or constructive)	66%	63%	63%	63%
Sexual harassment	20%	25%	17%	20%
Race/national origin harassment	15%	20%	22%	30%
Failure to accommodate (disability)	7%	11%	14%	14%

\*Some cases raise more than one issue, so the percentages may total more than 100%

### Performance Highlights

The commission resolved 539 cases of discrimination, the vast majority of which will not go into either state or federal court. During that same time period, 532 new cases of discrimination were filed by the citizens of Idaho. The balance seen in those numbers is a good indication that the administrative system devised by the Legislature is working as intended. The commission surveys all parties, who may answer anonymously, at the close of every case about their experience in working with the commission. We are pleased to report that in FY 2005, 100% of the Respondents (business owners) who returned the survey expressed satisfaction with the commission's work.

During FY 2005, commission staff filled 35 requests for technical assistance presentations, primarily on the issues of harassment in the workplace, disability discrimination, and creating and maintaining a respectful workplace. Also this year, the commission partnered with disability advocacy groups, members of the Legislature, and other concerned citizens to amend the Idaho Human Rights Act, effective July 1, 2005, to prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities in places of public accommodation. An important goal of the legislation was to provide a state-based mechanism to resolve these issues.

#### For More Information Contact

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